



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE  
FOR EMERGENCY MEDICINE

## POLICY

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# POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL TELEPHONE SUPPORT TO OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document is a policy of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and relates to the provision of emergency medical support over the telephone to external health professionals who phone a hospital Emergency Department (ED).

This policy is applicable to EDs in general.

## 2. POLICY

ACEM recognises that external health professionals such as community General Practitioners (GPs), nurse or rural health practitioners will telephone the ED in an attempt to seek emergency physician advice regarding their patients.

It is recognised that any telephone advice is dependent on information provided by the health practitioner, and emergency physicians are interpreting this information with a lack of visual cues that help determine the potential severity of a patient's illness, thus a full direct assessment cannot be made.

It is recognised that advice given by telephone does not constitute a full assessment, and ED staff should err on the side of caution. Emergency Department staff should seek to ensure that patients receive an appropriate full assessment in an ED if appropriate.

## 3. PROCEDURE AND ACTIONS

Emergency Departments should ensure that all ED staff are aware of the policy on telephone advice to health practitioners.

Where advice is given, the date, time and advice should be documented, as should the identity and role of the caller, and the patient for whom advice was given

## 4. DATES AND NOTES

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